

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUWAIT 02312 181138Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20
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R 181115Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 733
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS KUWAIT 2312

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BA, MILI, ZP
SUBJECT: BAHRAIN DEF MIN OF GULF SECURITY AND ARMS
PROCUREMENT

1. KUWAITI DAILY AL RAI AL AM CARRIED INTERVIEW APRIL 13
WITH BAHRAIN CROWN PRINCE/DEF MIN, SHEIKH HAMAD BIN ISA
AL-HALIFA, IN WHICH HE TOUCHED ON GULF SECURITY AND
BAHRAIN MILITARY PROCUREMENT POLICY, AMONG OTHER THINGS.
(INTERVIEW POUCHED EMBASSY MANAMA.)

2. GULF SECURITY. IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY WHETHER THE
DANGER TO THE SECURITY OF THE GULF WAS EXTERNAL OR INTERNAL,
HE SAID: "NOT INTERNAL." HE THEN EXPANDED ON THE THEME THAT
BAHRAIN LIES AT THE "SOUTHERN EDGE" OF THE ARAB WORLD AND THAT
ITS PROTECTION IS, THEREFORE, NECESSARY TO THE PROTECTION OF
THE "DEPTHS" OF THE ARAB NATION. HE ALSO NOTED THE
VALUABLE OIL RESOURCES POSSESSED BY BAHRAIN AND HER
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NEIGHBORS AND, BE WAY OF JUSTIFYING THE EXPANSION OF GULF
MILITARY FORCES, ALLUDED TO HISTORICAL BRITISH MILITARY
PROTECTION OF BRITISH COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN THE GULF. HE
ALSO EXPRESSED GENERAL WILLINGNESS TO SEND BAHRAIN FORCES
TO ANSWER THE CALL OF "ARAB DUTIES." REGARDING COORDINATED
GULF SECURITY, SHEIKH HAMAD CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS A
NATURAL DEVELOPMENT.

3. ARMS PROCUREMENT. SHEIKH HAMAD NOTED THAT BAHRAIN BUYS ARMS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES AND LOOKS FORWARD TO THE DAY WHEN WEAPONS WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM ARAB MANUFACTURERS. HE REPORTEDLY STATED: "I DO NOT CARE WHERE WEAPONS COME FROM AS MUCH AS I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE TRAINING AND MAINTENANCE OF WEAPONS. THERE IS NOTHING TO PREVENT ME FROM RECEIVING WEAPONS FROM ANY SIDE WHICH MEETS THESE CONDITIONS..." NOTING THAT BAHRAIN IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE ARAB INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION (AIO), THE MEMBERS OF WHICH HE NAMED, SHEIKH HAMAD IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL ARAB COUNTRIES TO BUY ARAB-MADE WEAPONS, IN ORDER TO AVOID "SPENDING HUGE SUMS" ON NON-ARAB ARMS. HE GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE FAVORS WHAT HE CONCEIVED TO BE AIO PLANS TO MANUFACTURE ARMS IN ALL THE MEMBER COUNTRIES.
MAESTRONE

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